

**GROUND WATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
7th MEETING SUMMARY
February 20, 2002**

**Prepared by:
Department of Natural Resources
Office of Conservation
Ground Water Management Staff**

SUMMARY

Call to Order

Commission members in attendance:

Karen Gautreaux, Chairman

Phil Boudreaux, Assistant Commissioner of Conservation

Zahir "Bo" Bolourchi, Secretary, DOTD

George Cardwell, Capital Area Ground Water Commission

William "Bill" Cefalu, Police Jury Association

Peggy Gantt, Louisiana Municipal Association

Dale Givens, Secretary, DEQ

Fulbert Leon Namwamba, Geologist

Brad Spicer, Agriculture & Forestry

John Roussel, Assistant Secretary Wildlife & Fisheries

Kyle McCann for Linda Zaunbrecher, Farm Bureau Member

Dean Lowe for Jimmy Guidry, Department of Health and Hospitals

Ground Water Management Staff Report

Mr. Duplechin, Chief of Staff, read into the record the number of Water Well Information Sheets received since the last Commission meeting (45) and the number of just causes rendered (6) since the last Commission meeting. The staff has collected a total of 253 Water Well Information Sheets. A number of information sheets (7) were sent to the staff that did not have the proper 60-day notice or did the owner request a just cause variance.

Due to the Department of Natural Resources' move into the LaSalle Building and issues involved with that move, the Staff decided to wait until a later date to add anything new to the Commission's Web Site.

During the month, members of the staff attended several meetings around the state. The meetings included the Louisiana Ground Water Association in Alexandria where Mr. Duplechin was given booth space to set up information and was invited to speak about Act 446. He thanked the Louisiana Association for the invitation to speak.

Other meetings attended by staff members included a meeting of the Sparta Ground Water Conservation District in Ruston. A copy of the Sparta Ground Water Conservation District's project report and recommendations which were distributed at the meeting will be sent to the Ground Water Management Commissioners. Mr. Duplechin gave a presentation on the procedure for filing an application for hearings for a critical ground water area to the Sparta Commission.

The staff met with Commissioners Gautreaux and Bolourchi to discuss water well information collection. The staff also met with the Commission's consultant on several occasions to discuss ground water data and information availability and to get a progress report on where they stand with their project.

Mr. Duplechin will address the Drainage Public Works and Water Resources Committee of the Louisiana Police Jury Association at their annual meeting in Monroe. The National Ground Water Association in association with the Ground Water Foundation moved this years National Ground Water Awareness Week to the week of March 17th through the 23rd. Mr. Duplechin stated that this would be a good opportunity to get the word out about ground water. A proposed proclamation that the staff has asked Commissioner Gautreaux to present to Governor Foster for his consideration and signing was given to the Commissioners.

Ground Water Management Advisory Task Force Committee Reports

Three reports were given during the meeting. Commissioner Gautreaux recapped the report from the joint Economic Development and Public Supply Committee report. The committees will meet to discuss a model to look at incentives, or other economic tools as alternative sources.

Mr. Henry Graham summarized the partial results of a survey sent to chemical and refining industries by the Industrial Committee. Forty-five responses were received of the 86 mailed. Preliminary results include: the predominant use of ground water usage in industry is from 200 wells and is used for cooling purposes (52%); the average daily use is approximately 64.5 million gallons a day; estimated new ground water wells is (1) at about 1 million gallons per day; 6 ground water wells will be shut down in the future which would reduce usage by 1.5 million gallons per day; potential surface water uses were estimated by (22) companies to be the Mississippi River; a couple mentioned the Sabine River and approximately 18 mentioned there were no suitable alternatives for their facility.

Commissioner Cefalu had several questions about the report. Commissioner Gautreaux asked the staff to distribute copies of the report to the Commissioners.

The Outreach Committee plans to have a recommended strategy for the Advisory Task Force by the March meeting. The committee is planning to devise a survey to gather information from the public regarding what information they need from the Advisory Task Force.

Consultants Report

Raymond Reaux of C.H. Fenstermaker made a brief report on the progress. The consultants are in the 2 ½ month stage of a 6 month schedule in meeting deliverables. Mr. Reaux reported meeting with Commissioner Gautreaux and Anthony Duplechin the day before. It was recommended that two meetings be scheduled for May. The first meeting would be to deliver the product and answer questions about what is presented. The second meeting would allow for the Commission to deliver formal comments giving the consulting firm time to make revisions before the June 15th deadline.

Bruce Darling reported that the consultants had been busy contacting as many agencies as possible regarding the availability of data, the extensiveness of the data, and how applicable those particular databases might be to water planning.

In addition, the consultants reported meeting with other groups to build reliable assumptions for their forecasts. Meetings are scheduled to gather enough information to complete that phase. The consultants will also provide water planning programs in other states for the Commission's review. Copies of information gathered were distributed to the Commissioners.

The Consultants are also working with water planning programs in other states. They plan to provide the Task Force with a blueprint of how other states have approached water planning issues. The document should be ready within the next month.

Commissioner Namwamba recommended adding Southern University to the list of universities to be contacted. He also made recommendations on the map distributed by the consultants.

OLD BUSINESS

Registration of Domestic and Replacement Wells

As a result of discussion of these wells during the last Commission meeting, the staff met with Commissioner Bolourchi and Commissioner Gautreaux to discuss the issue and developed recommendations for the Commission. The staff reviewed the transcripts of all meetings held since the first meeting in August, finding that the Commission had approved all wells recommended.

In order to exclude domestic and replacement wells from the list of those expected to submit information to the Office of Conservation, the Commission had to vote. It was decided that this information could be obtained from the Department of Transportation and Development's data base as it becomes available. Commissioner Cefalu made the motion that the owners of domestic and replacement wells not be required to submit well information to the Commissioner of Conservation and will accept the registration information from DOTD's database for domestic and replacement wells. Commissioner Givens seconded the motion. All Commissioners present voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. Duplechin reiterated that he was having more success in getting the word out that the Office of Conservation is not permitting or registering wells, just collecting information. One of the best venues was when he spoke to the Louisiana Ground Water Association.

Emergency Rules

The current Emergency Rule will expire on or about March 30th. The staff recommended that the Commission vote to extend the Emergency Rule until there has been at least one hearing. Since it is not likely the Sparta Commission will publish a notice of intent in the next couple of weeks, the staff recommended the reapproval during the next Commission meeting. Copies of the current Emergency Rule were included in the Commissioners' packets.

Home Rule Charter

Mr. Jim Marchand gave brief overview of the home rule charter legislative situation in terms of possible preemption. He distributed copies of the nine-page overview to the Commissioners. Mr. Marchand discussed the three types of local governments under the home rule scenario: The pre '74 constitution home rule scenario; the post '74 constitution home rule governments; and the non-home rule governments. Commissioners' Cefalu and Namwamba had several questions about the information given.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

SCHEDULE FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, March 20, 2002 at 1:30 p.m.